

June 2000

Awareness Training

On

ECSTASY (MDMA)

Navy Personnel Command
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TAKE TIME TO PREPARE!

One of the best ways to combat illicit drug abuse by Sailors is to stay informed and keep them informed.

Goal: From the information presented, participants will become aware of what Ecstasy is, who is abusing Ecstasy, what the symptoms are, and what the legal and health consequences of Ecstasy abuse are.

II. Training Objectives: Participants will be able to

- ◆ identify the forms of Ecstasy, how it is used, and who is abusing Ecstasy
- ◆ explain the effects of Ecstasy abuse
- ◆ cite the Federal law and Navy policy concerning Ecstasy
- ◆ cite some of the Ecstasy abuse health consequences.
- ◆ identify some behavioral and physical symptoms of Ecstasy abuse

V. Information:

◆ This awareness training has been developed so the information can be delivered, in whole as part of command GMT or in part via Plan-of-the-Day notes, memos, Division/Workcenter notices, flyers, posters, etc.

◆ Before conducting training, trainer may wish to get further information from:

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) by logging on the NIDA website: www.drugabuse.gov or call toll free 1-888-644-6432;

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug Information (NCADI)
Website: www.health.org or call toll free 1-800-729-6686;

Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence Branch (Pers-603)
DSN 882-4252, 4240, or 4400; commercial (901) 874-4252, 4240, or 4400. E-mail P603C@persnet.navy.mil, P603D@persnet.navy.mil, or P603@persnet.navy.mil.

ECSTASY (MDMA) Awareness Training

INTRODUCTION

Ecstasy (MDMA) is an amphetamine-based drug with hallucinogenic properties. Other names include X, E, XTC, Adam, the love drug, and hug drug. In its purest form, Ecstasy is a powder. However, it is most often found pressed into tablets, which vary widely in color and size. Most Ecstasy tablets are the size of an aspirin tablet. These different brands of Ecstasy are sold under different names (i.e. 007, butterfly, 7 of Diamonds, Camel, Cloud 9, Crown, Green Heart, Pink Heart, JB, Medusa, Mitsubishi, MTV, Rolex, Star, and Star 2). Average cost per "dose" or "hit" ranges from \$10 to \$30 dollars each.

Young adults and adolescents at clubs, raves (large, all-night dance parties), and concerts, most often use Ecstasy. Recently, in the civilian sector, there has been an alarming increase in the popularity of some very dangerous substances collectively known as "club drugs." The term "club drugs" refers to drugs being used by young adults at all-night parties, otherwise known as "raves" or "trances", dance clubs, and bars. Ecstasy is one of those drugs gaining widespread popularity. During the past two (2) years, Navy has also experienced an increase in samples testing positive for Ecstasy.

WHAT is a "RAVE"

RAVES are usually non-alcoholic dances or parties that last all night with a target population 16 to 21 year olds. Dancing for hours to trance-inducing music in an atmosphere much different from the typical nightclub. It is at these all-night parties where Ecstasy and other designer drugs such as ketamine (Special K) and GHB most frequently show up. The new club-drug scene has a number of characteristics that make it a risk-laden situation. First, many of those involved are young and have little knowledge of the drugs Ecstasy, GHB, or ketamine. Second, the dominant drug used on this scene, MDMA or Ecstasy is marketed as a "safe" drug used by everyone.

A misconception among Sailors abusing Ecstasy (MDMA) is that Navy Drug Screening Labs (NDSLs) do not test for MDMA.

FACT: NDSLs test every urine sample for Ecstasy (MDMA).

HISTORY AND DEGREE OF THE PROBLEM

Ecstasy abuse goes back to the early 1900s; it has an extremely high potential for abuse and has no accepted medical use in the United States. As early as the mid-1980s society witnessed the emergence and popularization of the drug Ecstasy. Recently, the civilian sector has experienced an alarming increase in the abuse of Ecstasy by adolescents and young adults.

In 1995, Navy began to see a small number of Sailors testing positive for Ecstasy. In FY-99, Navy experienced a two-fold increase in individuals testing positive for Ecstasy compared to FY-98. Although Ecstasy abuse in the Navy is relatively low at this time, there is growing concern about Ecstasy's increased popularity in the civilian community carrying over into Navy.

WHO IS ABUSING ECSTASY AND WHY?

Ecstasy is an amphetamine-based drug with psychedelic properties that has gained popularity over the past decade among adolescents and young adults who frequent raves (large, all-night dance parties), all night clubs, and concerts. Besides price and availability, the other reasons people use Ecstasy are:

- ◆ myth of Sailors that Navy Drug Screening Labs (NDSLs) do not test for Ecstasy (MDMA);
- ◆ quick onset of effects and initial "rush" of energy usually described as mild but euphoric;
- ◆ perception of increased empathy and self-insight;
- ◆ alleged fewer side effects and unpleasant emotional reactions than other drugs (i.e. cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine);
- ◆ reported euphoric and sensual effects associated with Ecstasy;
- ◆ ease of ingestion without stigma of smoking, snorting, or injecting; and
- ◆ A sense of belonging to a special group, especially at "raves".

HOW IS ECSTASY (MDMA) USED

Ecstasy (MDMA) is most often available in tablet form and is usually ingested orally.

In its purest form Ecstasy (MDMA) is a crystalline powder and is sometimes snorted, occasionally smoked, and rarely injected. Adolescents and young adults rationalize that by taking a tablet they avoid the stigma of drug abuse normally associated with snorting, smoking, and injecting a drug.

SIDE EFFECTS OF ECSTASY (MDMA)

While the following could be warning signs of many other abused substances, here are some signs of possible Ecstasy abuse:

- jaw clenching and teeth grinding;
- increased heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature;
- eye wiggles, tightened muscles, nervousness;
- sweating, chills, and nausea;
- next-day sleepiness;
- loss of appetite.

Ecstasy can cause toxic reactions in people with asthma, heart conditions, diabetes, epilepsy, psychosis, or depression.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Ecstasy (MDMA)?

ECSTASY is an addictive, mind-altering and potentially deadly drug. Ecstasy is an amphetamine-based drug with hallucinogenic properties. The effects of Ecstasy can dramatically differ for each individual.

What does Ecstasy (MDMA) look like?

ECSTASY powder is usually pressed into tablets, which vary widely in color and size. Generally, they size is similar to an aspirin tablet. These different 'brands' of Ecstasy are sold under different names. A couple of the early ones, for example, were called 'Love Doves' and 'New Yorkers'. Some of the current brands being sold are 007, Camel, Butterfly, Crown, Heart, JB, Star etc.).

What are the effects of Ecstasy (MDMA)?

The effects of Ecstasy vary with the individual taking it, the purity of the drug, the amount taken, and the surroundings in which the drug is taken. Ecstasy generally takes about 30-60 minutes to take effect. To start with there may be effects such as sweating, dry mouth, an increase in heart rate, and loss of appetite. Medical experts report side effects from depression and paranoia to potentially dangerous increases in heart rate and blood pressure. Ecstasy has mild hallucinogenic properties and some images are sometimes seen when high doses are used. The effects usually peak for about 2 hours although they may persist for hours.

Is Ecstasy (MDMA) addictive?

ECSTASY isn't physically addictive, but a psychological dependence (when an individual thinks that she/he cannot do without it) can occur. With frequent use tolerance can build up so that more has to be used to get the same effect. On stopping it, many people experience depression and fatigue.

What are the side effects of Ecstasy (MDMA)?

These include nausea, dizziness and jaw tension. Symptoms such as anxiety and panic attacks, insomnia, confusion, and depression have been reported when Ecstasy has been used over long periods. Because Ecstasy increases heart rate and blood pressure, there is a greater risk for anyone with heart problems or high blood pressure. Ecstasy has been connected with several deaths. The people involved were apparently healthy and had not taken unusually large doses. Medical research has linked the deaths with heat exhaustion. Ecstasy raises body temperature and causes fluid loss. Ecstasy users also commonly report a "burnout" for one-two days afterward, characterized by tiredness, soreness, and dullness of the senses and mental processes.

Psychological difficulties, including confusion, depression, sleep problems, drug craving, severe anxiety, and paranoia - during and sometimes weeks after taking Ecstasy (even psychotic episodes have been reported).

Physical symptoms such as muscle tension, involuntary teeth clenching, nausea, blurred vision, rapid eye movement, faintness, chills or sweating, and increases in heart rate and blood pressure are common.

Legal Position

ECSTASY (MDMA) is illegal in the United States. It is listed as a Schedule I "controlled substance", making use, possession, supply, or production illegal. The penalties are the same as those for any controlled substance. Any Sailor who uses Ecstasy is in violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), subject to discipline as appropriate, and will be processed for administrative separation.

What are the signs someone is abusing Ecstasy (MDMA)?

Ecstasy users are often seen with baby pacifiers or an athletic mouthpiece because they often involuntarily grind their teeth while under the influence of Ecstasy. Chemical lightsticks and painter's or surgeon's masks smeared with scented ointments such as vapor rub or other scented muscle ointments often are used while taking Ecstasy. The combination of these products while under the influence of Ecstasy heightens the user's senses and makes lights, smells and sounds much more intense.

What are some early signs of Ecstasy (MDMA) abuse:

Behavioral Symptoms

*Change in friends
Behavioral and emotional mood swings
Grinding and clenching teeth
Sleep problems
Unexplained fatigue and muscle soreness*

Physical Symptoms

*Change in attire and appearance
Attending "Rave" parties
Unexplained presence of baby
pacifiers or athletic mouth pieces
Unexplained presence of surgeon's
masks and vapor products*

What are some of the more common names for Ecstasy (MDMA):

007	7 of Diamonds	Bee	Boogie Nights
Buddah	Butterfly	Calvin Klein (Green, Blue, and Red)	
Camel	Cloud 9	Heart (Pink and Green)	
JB	Medusa	Mitsubishi	MTV
Rolex	Solar	Star	Star 2

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON ECSTASY (MDMA) ABUSE**

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